

**Title: Communicating With Providers**

**Session: W-6-1430**



# Objectives

- Identify the expectations
- Identify and overcome the obstacles
- Providing feedback to a provider



# Communication Is Easy, Right???

- Communication involves more than just one person sending a message to another. The process involves the negotiation of shared interpretations and understanding. Barnlund (1962, p. 203) explains that when you have a conversation with another person, there are, in a sense, six people involved in the conversation. They are:
  - who you think you are
  - who you think the other person is
  - who you think the other person thinks you are
  - who the other person thinks he or she is
  - who the other person thinks you are
  - who the other person thinks you think he or she is

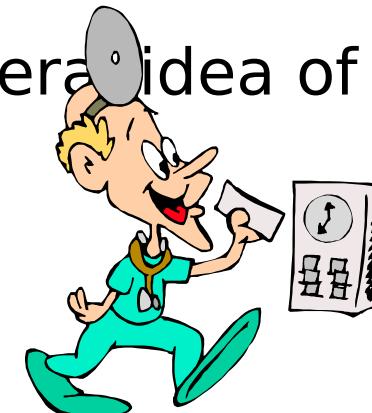


# What's Expected of the Coder

- Knowledge of the codes
- Knowledge of the coding rules
  - MHS
  - ICD-9 Guidelines
  - CPT Assistant
  - Other Industry Guidelines
- Ability to correctly assign the codes
- Knowledge and understanding of the provider specialty
  - Anatomy and Physiology
  - Medical procedures (Diagnostic & Therapeutic)
  - Pharmacology
  - Diseases and Pathology

# What's Expected of the Provider

- Good quality clinical documentation
  - Legible
  - Descriptive (location, severity, acute vs. chronic, etc.)
  - Completeness
- Understanding of the importance of coding in the MHS
- At least a general idea of what coding is about



# Obstacles

- Systems
  - AHLTA
  - Other systems (MEDPROS, etc.)
- Internal processes
- Time
- Communication Problems





# Obstacles - Systems

- AHLTA
  - Relying on the E/M calculator do provide the correct E/M level
  - Clicking diagnoses/procedures without documenting specific details
  - Relying on autocites
  - Copying and pasting
- Other Systems (MEDPROS, etc.)
  - Referencing information in the other system without providing specifics
    - Example: “See MEDPROS for immunization data”

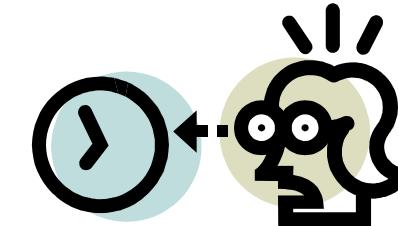
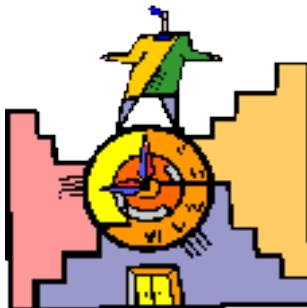


# Obstacles - Internal Processes

- Coder reports findings or sends a question to a supervisor, who relays it to the provider
- Written report is sent to provider (or provider's supervisor) without any face-to-face meeting
- Coder meets with clinic staff on a scheduled basis to discuss general coding issues
- E-mailing findings to provider
- Coder reports findings to supervisor, who reports it to provider's supervisor

# Obstacles - Time

- Provider has 10 minutes to talk with you
- You're scheduled to meet with the provider, but you still have to finish 10 more records...
- You have 20 minutes in the clinic staff meeting to cover all the coding issues for 15 providers





# Obstacles – Communication Problems

- Ambiguous statements
- Mixed message – Verbal doesn't balance with non-verbal
- Perceptions
- Too much information
- Allowing personal feelings to enter the conversation
- Status effects
- Approaching issues from coding and not clinical perspective
- Not being receptive or open to different viewpoint
- Defensiveness



# Providing Feedback to a Provider

- Preparation:
  - Review their notes
    - Where are the gaps in documentation
      - Diagnosis
      - E&M
      - Procedure
  - What are the most frequent problems or errors?
  - Get good examples
  - Get organized
- Meeting with the provider
  - Cover your main points
  - Ask questions and listen
  - Keep an open mind
  - Use coding references, but give examples

# Don't Do This...

- “You selected the wrong diagnosis...”
- “You didn’t document in the right format...”
- “According to the CPT definition you didn’t do that procedure...”
- “You can’t do that...”
- “You should write your note this way...”
- “I just don’t think you documented enough to...”
- “This will get you more RVUs...”
- Explain every detail in the coding rule-





**Do..**

- Emphasize that you're trying to help improve the quality of the provider's documentation, not the quantity
- Provide examples of where there are problems in the provider's documentation, with suggestions for improvement
- Be receptive to what the provider is saying - work with them and try to get from "No" to "Yes"



## References

- U.S. Army Skillport Course - Interpersonal Communications: The Process
- U.S. Army CES Foundation Course
- Defense Acquisition University Continuous Learning Course HBS 233, Feedback Essentials